

Climate Conversations Spring Cleaning

St Mark's Creation Care Ministry

March 2024



Agenda

- Land Acknowledgement
- Opening Prayer
- Spring Cleaning the Home
- Discussion
- Spring Cleaning for Mind & Spirit
- Sharing and Q&A
- Closing Prayer



Opening Prayer

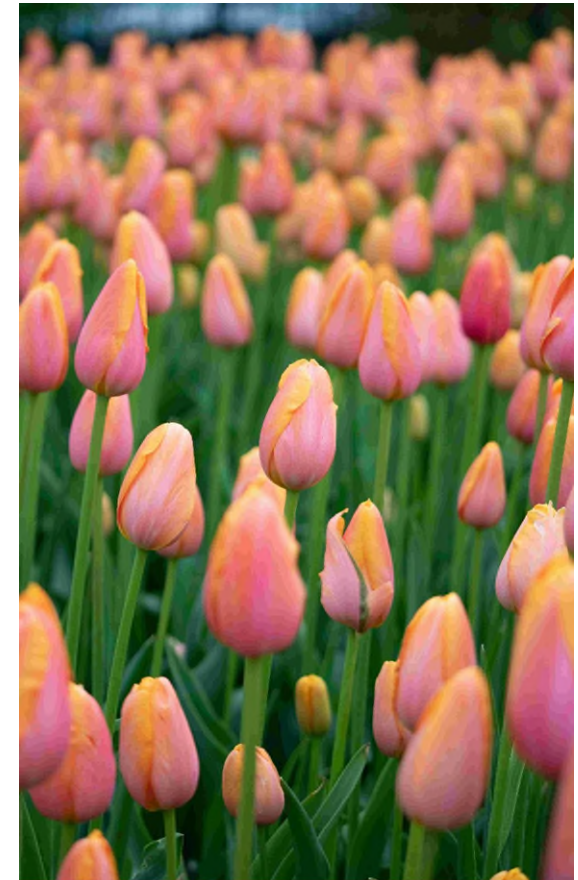
Creator God, we confess that we have taken your gifts for granted. We have failed to care for seas and the forests. We have broken our duty to steward the earth. Forgiving God, forgive us for the ways in which we contribute to this destruction. Forgive us for our lack of courage to resist endless consumerist growth.

Gracious God, transform our hearts and minds, that we may place the welfare of your earth before profit. Help us to live for the world's healing and our own. Embolden us to challenge injustice and unsustainability. Amen



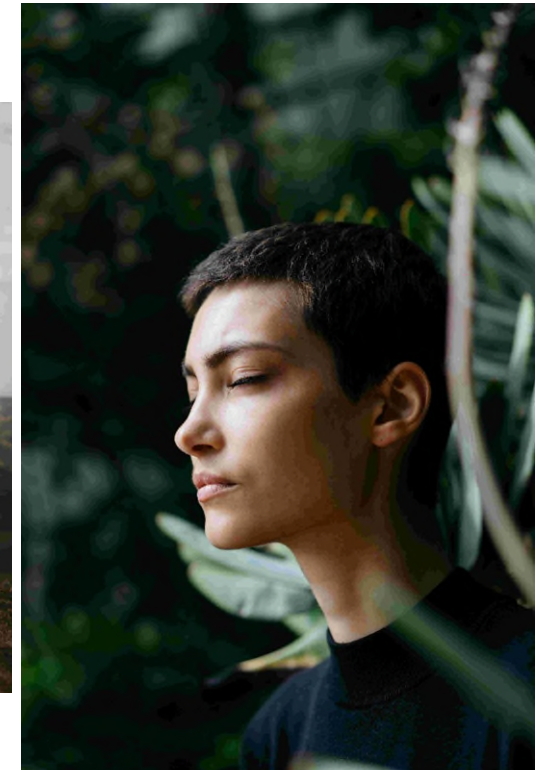
What is Spring Cleaning

- The start of spring reminds us to start decluttering, organizing, and cleaning
- Spring cleaning has many components
 - De-clutter and get rid of the things no longer needed, used, or loved
 - Deep cleaning of our home and garden
 - Pruning - keep what is productive in our lives and get rid of what isn't
- Historically, homes heated with wood or coal left a layer of soot and ash, so it was time to air out the house and clean



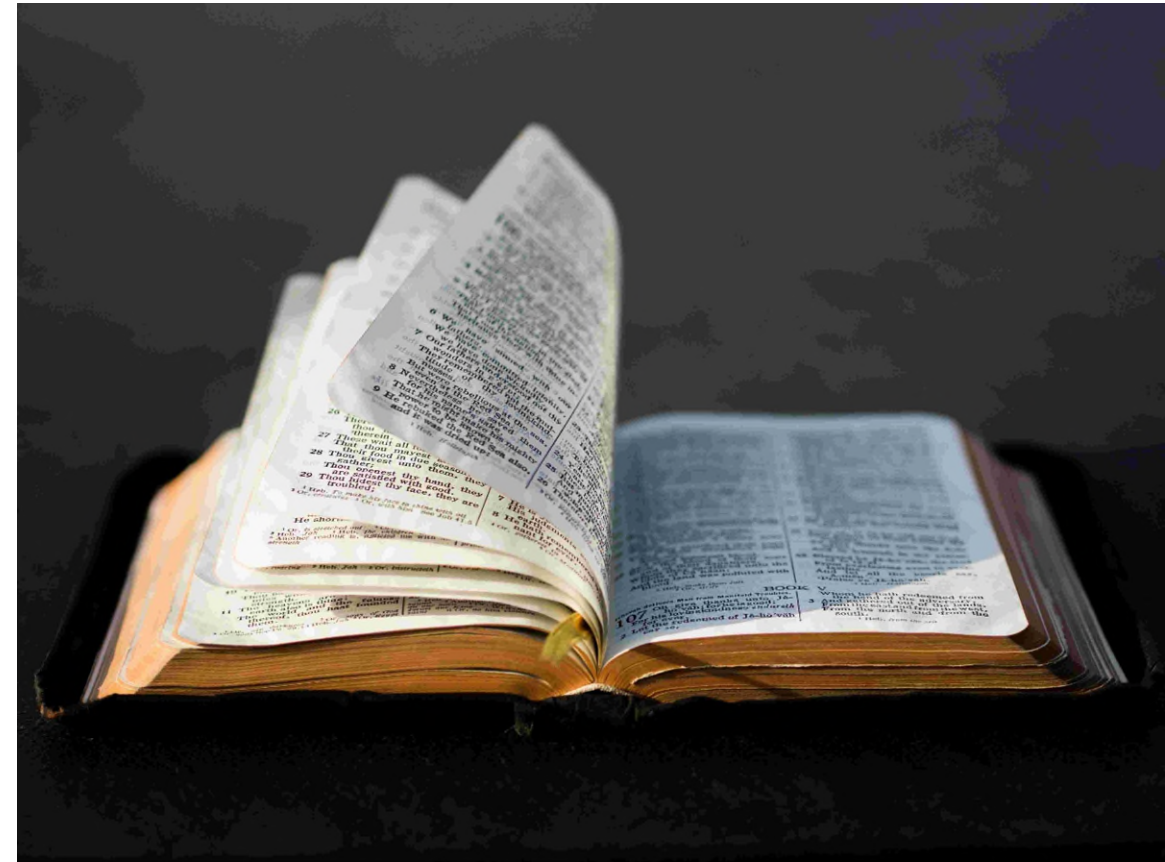
Spring Cleaning Goes Beyond the House

- Decluttering our homes symbolizes cleansing, creating space to think and for new creative projects, leaving you refreshed and restored
- Spring cleaning is also for your mind and spiritual life
 - Cleaning is linked to improved mood, less stress and greater creativity
 - Declutter toxic relationships, bad habits, negative talk and negative thoughts to rejuvenate your mental and physical health, which creates room for positive friendships, reflection and mindfulness



Minimizing, Pruning & Recovering

- Ecclesiastes 3: There is a time for everything... a time to keep and a time to throw away
- Matthew 6 19-21: Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.
- John 15 1-6: I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful
- Luke 15 8-10: A woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?



Spring Cleaning Framework

For Spring cleaning

- Reuse everything, or donate for others to use
- Repurpose: Re-invent an object before sending it to landfill
- Repair before you replace: A new coat of paint, some new screws
- Refurbish old stuff: Give it new use life

Spring cleaning can inspire everyday actions

- Reduce consumption: Do you really need it or have something similar? Exercise self-control.
- Rethink your purchases: How much packaging? What kind of company is making it? Buy used. Vote with your money.
- Refuse single use: Carry your own water bottle, straw, silverware and reusable bag

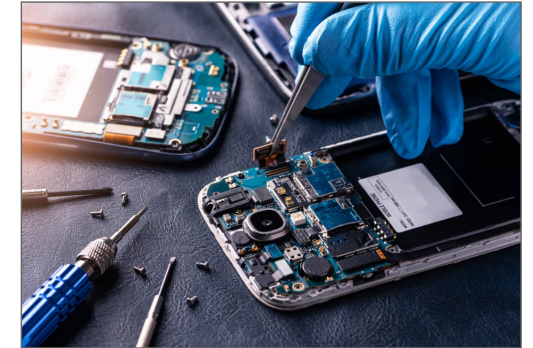
Help with Repair:

King County EcoConsumer

Our EcoConsumer program highlights the environmental impacts of our everyday purchasing decisions. Find information on repair events and businesses, tool and gear libraries, and tips for sustainable holidays.



[Repair events](#)



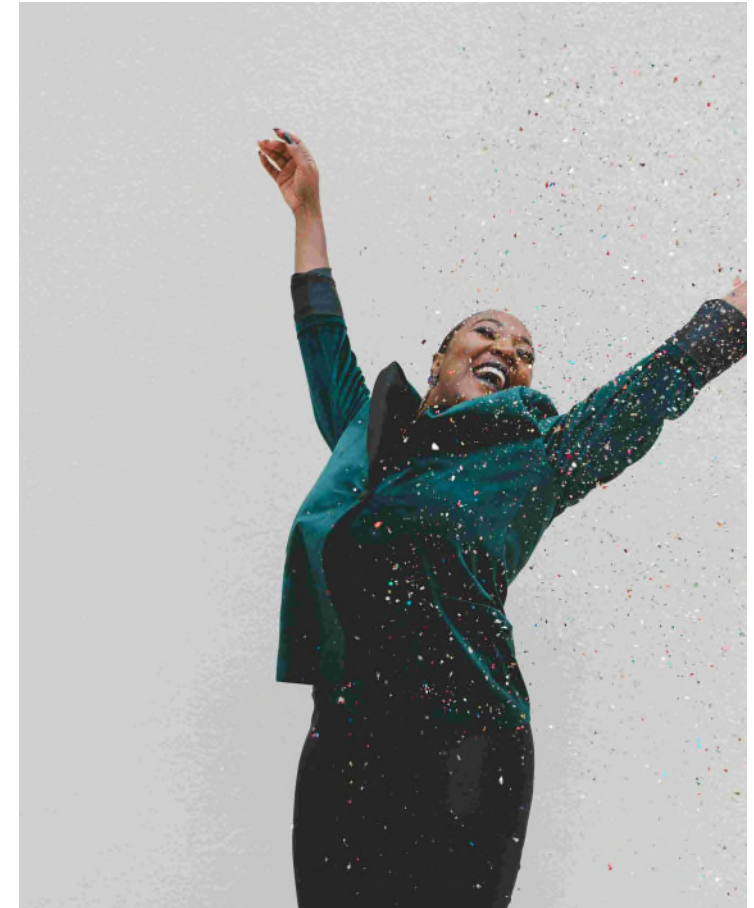
[Repair businesses](#)

<https://kingcounty.gov/es-es/dept/dnrp/waste-services/garbage-recycling-compost/solid-waste-programs/ecoconsumer>

<https://genesis-umc.org/genesis-practices-creation-care/>

Make Cleaning a Joy

- Choose comfortable clothes and music
- Take time before you start to strategize
- Create a 'to do' list
- Create and follow a schedule
- Prepare boxes for keeping, donating and tossing
 - Do one section of your home at a time
 - Remove objects from shelves, clean them, and keep, donate or toss
- Take 'before' and 'after' photos



Components of Spring Cleaning

A Martha Stewart [checklist](#)

- Prepare supplies
- Tasks
 - Clean baseboards
 - Dust, vacuum and mop
 - Wipe walls, ceilings & lights
 - Clean doors & windows
 - Clean furniture and appliances, under and over
 - Clean carpets & curtains
 - Polish & wax
 - Reuse or recycle unneeded clothes, books and more



Consider the Marie Kondo Method

- Principles:
 1. Keep only those things that spark joy.
 2. Give everything you keep a permanent place in your home.
- Gather all of one type of object from every room and put them in one big pile to get an idea of the true volume of clothes, books or anything else you own
 - Sort by category, not by location
- When going through the piles, hold up each object and ask yourself one simple question: does it spark joy?
- If the answer is no, donate it to someone in need



Clean with a Creation Care Mindset

- Dust or wipe with old clothes or towels instead of paper towels
- Take an inventory of postal mail and consider what to switch to paperless
- Toss the toxin and use non-toxic cleaning products instead
- Use DIY cleaning products such as:
 - Baking soda & white vinegar, a bubbly and effective way to scrub your tub
 - Wipe stainless steel appliances with a few drops of dish soap with warm water
 - Essential oils for pleasing scents
 - For tough stains, use vinegar, lemons or baking soda



Clean with a Creation Care Mindset

- Use beeswax to nourish and protect wooden surfaces rather than spraying furniture polish
- Use less water - sweep
- Control critters: Potted basil plants repel flies. Use a 50/50 solution of white vinegar and water to dispel ants. Place cinnamon sticks, cedar blocks, lavender sachets and dried lemon peels in drawers to repel moths



Discussion & Breakout Session

Questions:

- Do you do spring cleaning?
- How can you think of spring cleaning as more than just washing and decluttering?
- What are your practices for spring cleaning or a thorough cleaning?



Make Decluttering Low-Stress

- Tackle one category at a time
- Edit your wardrobe automatically – donate what you don't wear
- Scan your stuff – photos and more – [PhotoScan](#)
- Make donating part of your routine
- Gamify – 20 items in 20 minutes



Reuse/Re-purpose, Recycle, Donate, Dispose

- Reuse items in a new way
- Re-purpose or donate old clothes to thrift stores instead of throwing them out
- Textile recycling turns unwearable clothing or fabrics into reusable materials
- Figure out what you can recycle – [Seattle Public Utilities](#)
 - Recycle what it is possible to do
- Consider selling unwanted items
- Donate
 - Goodwill, Buy Nothing, and more
- Dispose of items
 - Some items do go in the trash



Create Crafts to Reuse Items

- Reuse old towels, toilet paper rolls, plastic bags, plastic bottles, broken crayons, empty containers and more
- Toilet rolls: Use to make a kitchen knife case, cute toys or yarn pom poms.
- Crayons: Create colorful candles, paintings, animal-shaped or Lego-shaped chucks, pendants, and prints for T-shirts using parchment
- Milk jug: A bird feeder or hanging planter



Spring Clean Your Mind

- Get rid of self-criticism through awareness and reframing
- Drop old habits
- Reconnect with your values
- Use tools to maintain your new habits
 - Cues, and systems of accountability
- Tackle projects you've been putting off
- Renew your spirit: meditation, gratitude, prayer or deep breathing



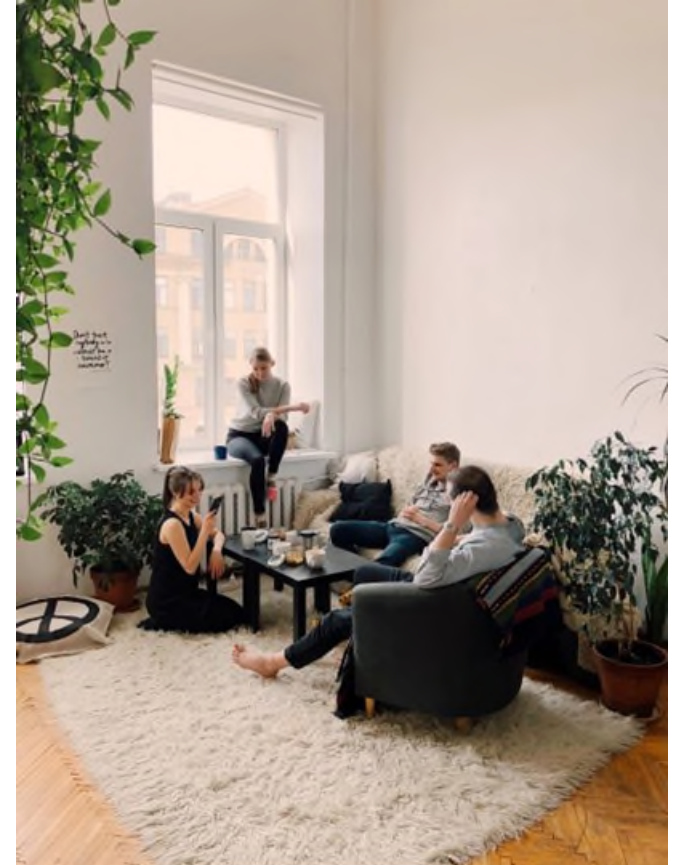
Spiritual Spring Cleaning

- Take an honest look at the fruitful and unfruitful activities in your life
 - Ask whether having a particular item “bears fruit” and turns thoughts toward God or away from God
- We sometimes hold on to old attitudes about God, ourselves or something else
- Find valuable treasures we lost or forgot
 - Learnings or bible verses
- Spiritually prepare our hearts for a new season
 - Reflect on blessings, give thanks, and create a peaceful environment



Spread the Word

- Talk with family, friends and neighbors about your practices for spring cleaning
 - They are also thinking about what they can do to help the environment
 - You can be an example and change behaviors
- Discuss ideas with them and see what solutions you can work on together



Sharing, Discussion and Q&A

Questions

- What actions do you take to reuse, repair, recycle or donate?
- How can we refresh our mind and spirit?
- What can we do to share our experiences and influence others to care for creation?



Make a Difference

Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful – William Morris

What I know for sure is that when you declutter – whether it's on your home, your head, or your heart – it is astounding what will flow into that space that will enrich you, your life, and your family – Peter Walsh

Closing Prayer

God, We thank you for the resources of the world, and for the many goods available to us. Grant us wisdom and restraint in our spending and consumption; grant us inspiration in the re-use and recycling of resources.

Help us to find ways to lead lives that respect and revere your creation, that provide sustainability for future generations, and that teach others to respect the beauty and wonder of your creation

Amen

